

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-02 PRS-01 SAM-01 ACDA-05

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /074 W

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O P 201715Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5446

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 2409

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR SP SS MO

SUBJ: DISCUSSION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI ON SAHARA

REF: STATE 113002

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING MAY 20, I CARRIED OUT INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED REFTEL TO EXPRESS TO FONMIN LARAKI USG CONCERN OVER POSSIBILITY GOM TAKING MORE MILITANT APPROACH TO SAHARA ISSUE. WHILE REFLECTING FIRMNESS AS TO MOROCCAN AIMS, LARAKI STRESSED MOROCCAN DESIRE FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF SAHARA DISPUTE, WHICH HE SAID WAS SHARED BY MANY SPANIARDS. LARAKI ALSO DISPLAYED CONTINUING UNHAPPINESS AT GOS DIPLOMATIC "IMMOBILITY", AND MOROCCAN CONCERN THAT SPAIN MIGHT IRRATIONALLY ESCALATE DISPUTE MILITARILY. HE FORESAW FAVORABLE OUTCOME OF ICJ ADJUDICATION; IF ICJ DID NOT ISSUE OPINION SUPPORTING MOROCCO'S PREVIOUS SOVEREIGNTY IN SAHARA, MOROCCO WOULD GO ALONG WITH REFERENDUM PROVIDED IT NOT SPANISH-RIGGED AND WAS TRUE EXPRESSION OF WILL OF PEOPLE. END SUMMARY.

2. I CALLED ON FONMIN LARAKI MAY 20 FOR FRIENDLY ONE-CONFIDENTIAL

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HOURLY SESSION TO CARRY OUT INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED REFTEL.

I BEGAN DISCUSSION BY NOTING THAT PRESIDENT, AS FONMIN KNEW, WOULD SOON BE VISITING SEVERAL EUROPEAN CITIES INCLUDING MADRID, AND IT WAS THEREFORE IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD HAVE LATEST GOM THINKING. LARAKI COMMENTED THAT GOM OF COURSE UNDERSTOOD THAT U.S. CONDUCTING DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN, BUT MOROCCAN "MAN IN STREET" WONDERED ABOUT THIS SHOW OF U.S. SYMPATHY FOR SPAIN. GOS, HE ADDED, WAS PURSUING "POLICY OF ANARCHY" CAPABLE OF CREATING DISORDER IN REGION.

3. LARAKI ELABORATED THAT SPANISH UN PERM REP DE PINIES HAD SENT LETTER TO SYG WALDHEIM CLAIMING THAT PARTY FOR SAHARA NATIONAL UNION (APPARENTLY SPANISH-CREATED) REPRESENTED 20,000 SAHARANS FAVORING INDEPENDENCE. NOW THAT PARTY'S LEADER HAD RALLIED TO MOROCCAN CAUSE (RABAT 2395), THIS SHOWED THAT SPANISH DECLARATIONS COULD NOT BE TAKEN AT FACE VALUE. VOICE OF SAHARA HAD SPOKEN IN FAVOR OF REJOINING MOROCCO, LARAKI ASSERTED, AND SPANISH POSITION HAD SUFFERED SEVERE BLOW. HE WENT ON TO REITERATE MOROCCAN DESIRE TO RESOLVE SAHARA DISPUTE PEACEFULLY. AT SAME TIME, U.S. MUST HAVE NOTED, HE ADDED, THE TOTAL UNITY OF ALL SEGMENTS OF MOROCCAN POPULATION BEHIND GOM'S SAHARA POLICY.

4. I THEN DETAILED THE POINTS IN PARA 2 REFTTEL, EXPRESSING USG CONCERN THAT MOROCCO MAY BE CHANGING ITS APPROACH IN SAHARA DISPUTE TO MORE MILITANT POSTURE AND INDICATING THAT ANY SUCH SHIFT COULD CAUSE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES FOR U.S. LARAKI HEARD OUT MY STATEMENT ATTENTIVELY AND RESPONDED THAT HE WISHED AGAIN TO STRESS MOROCCAN INTENTION AND DETERMINATION TO SOLVE DISPUTE PEACEFULLY.

5. LARAKI WENT ON TO CITE ARTICLE IN SPANISH PRESS (HOJA DE LUNES OF MAY 19), QUOTING IT AS SAYING PAPER HAD EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE MOROCCO OFFERED SPAIN CLOSEST COLLABORATION, INCLUDING DIRECT TALKS, COMMON EXPLOITATION OF SAHARA PHOSPHATES, CONTRIBUTION TO GAS PIPELINE PASSING THROUGH OUJDA, AND UTILIZATION BY SPAIN

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OFLMILITARY BASES IN SAHARA. PAPER NOTED CRITICALLY THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO SPANISH RESPONSE, LARAKI POINTED OUT. ALTHOUGH THIS WAS SPANISH PAPER, HE ADDED, IT ACCURATELY PORTRAYED MOROCCAN POSITION.

6. IN REPLY TO MY QUERY REGARDING KING'S RECENT AUDIENCE WITH SPANISH AMBASSADOR, LARAKI REMARKED THAT SPANISH DIPLOMATS IN DIFFICULT POSITION. THEY KNEW, AS DID

IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN MADRID, THAT SPAIN SHOULD COME TO AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO. LARAKI EXPRESSED HIGH REGARD FOR SPANISH Q. RIMIN NAVARRO, WHO, HE SAID, SHARED THIS VIEW. ALL THAT PREVENTING AGREEMENT WAS AN "OLD MAN WHOSE LUCIDITY AND RESPONSIBILITY INCREASINGLY IN QUESTION." WASHINGTON'S INSTRUCTIONS, LARAKI NOTED, REFLECTED PREOCCUPATION WITH ESCALATION. GOM, HOWEVER, WAS CONCERNED OVER RISK OF SPANISH ESCALATION, NOT BECAUSE GOS OR SPANISH MILITARY FAVORED SUCH A THING BUT BECAUSE OF POSSIBILITY OF IRRATIONAL ACT ON PART OF "OLD MAN BEYOND HIS PRIME." KING'S COMMENTS ABOUT VIETNAMIZATION SHOULD BE SEEN, LARAKI EMPHASIZED, IN CONTEXT NOT OF MOROCCAN ESCALATION, BUT OF FEAR OF IRRATIONAL SPANISH ESCALATION THAT EVEN SPAIN DID NOT WANT.

7. I NOTED RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT ROCKETS HAD BEEN FIRED AT SPANISH HELICOPTERS NEAR SAHARA BORDER. LARAKI OFFICIALLY DENIED ANY GOM INVOLVEMENT.

8. LARAKI VOLUNTEERED THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING DURING RECENT VISIT HERE HAD CREATED VERY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION BY DEMONSTRATING UNDERSTANDING AND SENSITIVITY REGARDING MOROCCAN POLICY AND TACTICS ON SAHARA. MOROCCANS FEARED ANARCHY IN SAHARA, HE UNDERLINED; EVERYONE HAD SEEN WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN PORTUGAL, AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IN SPAIN.

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O P 201715Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5447

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AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 2409

9. IN ACCORDANCE PARA 3 REFTEL, I REQUESTED LARAKI'S VIEWS ON ICJ ADJUDICATION. HE SAID SPAIN HAD GOOD JURISTS AND ARCHIVES, BUT GOM FELT ITS CASE WAS SOLDI. WHEN ONE PARTY IN LEGAL DISPUTE MAINTAINS THAT OTHER PARTY'S CASE IS WEAK, HE QUIPPED, THAT MIGHT WELL MEAN WEAKNESS IN THE FIRST PARTY'S CASE. LARAKI CONFIDENTLY PREDICTED "POSITIVE" ICJ OUTCOME. REPLYING TO MY QUESTION ON POSSIBLE ICJ OPINIONS, LARAKI SAID THAT IF ICJ HELD LHAT THERE HAD BEEN PREVIOUS MOROCCAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER SAHARA, LOGMCAPKNEXTSTEP WOULD BE FOR UN TO PRESS FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES. IF ICJ D DECIDED THAT THERE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO ISSUE SUCH OPINION, MOROCCO, AS KING HAD STATED PREVIOUSLY, WOULD THEN GO ALONG WITH A REFERENDUM--NOT A SPANISH REFERENDUM, DH A TRUE EXPRESSION OF WILL OF PEOPLE.

10. ASKED ABOUT ISTIQLAL LEADER BOUCETTA'S RECENT APPARENT INTERMEDIARY EFFORTS WITH SPAIN, LARAKI COMMENTED THAT SPAIN HAD ALLEGED THAT MOROCCANS NOT UNITED ON SAHARA. BOUCETTA ROLE WAS THEREFORE USEFUL IN SHOWING MADRID "WE ALL OF SAME MIND," WHICH INCLUDED ALL OTHER PARTY LEADERS, LARAKI ASSERTED.
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11. LARAKI'S RECENT MISSION TO ALGIERS, LARAKI STATED, HAD PERMITTED MOROCCO TO MAKE CLEAR ITS VIEW AND TO OBTAIN CLEAR IDEA OF ALGERIAN POSITION. (HE DID NOT EXPLAIN FURTHERPN BUT IMPLICATION WAS THAT TWO POSITIONS RYVAINED AS MUCH AT ODDS AS BEFORE.) I NOTED RUMORS THAT KING'S CANCELLED TRIP TO EASTERN MOROCCO MIGHT HAVE ENTAILED SOME MOVES TOWARD MOROCCAN-ALGERIAN RAPPROCHEMENT. LARAKI DENIED CATEGORICALLY THAT ANY MEETING WITH BOUMEDIENE HAD BEEN ENVISAGED.

12. IN RESPONSE TO MY EXPRESSION (IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARA 3 REFTEL) OF DEPT'S APPRECIATION OF KING'S CONFIDENCE IN U.S. AND OF U.S. INTENTION TO CONTINUE ACTIVE INVOLVE-
MENT IN PEACE EFFORTS, LARAKI VOICD WARM GRATIFICATION. AS TO U.S. DOUBTS ABOUT UTILITY OF SECURITY COUNCIL AS EFFECTIVE FORUM FOR PEACEMAKING, LARAKI THOUGHT KING HAD HAD IN MIND U.S. BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH INDIVIDUAL POWERS, NOT NECESSARILY USE OF SC AS A FORUM.

13. COMMENT: LARAKI'S COMMENTS REFLECT THE CONFLICTING

IMPERATIVES BUFFETING GOM WHICH WE HAVE ANALYZED ELSE-
WHERE (E.G. RABAT 2374). GOM STRONGLY PREFERS
AMICABLE ARRANGEMENT WITH SPAIN BUT FEELS NEED FOR
PERIODIC "ESCALATION" IN FACE OF WHAT IT SEES AS PERSISTENT
SPANISH DIPLOMATIC IMMOBILITY, PARTICULARLY IN ORDER TO
MAINTAIN INTERNAL CREDIBILITY. LARAKI, I WOULD JUDGE,
FULLY GRASPED REASONS FOR OUR CONCERN AND POSSIBLE
IMPLICATIONS OF OUTBREAK OF SERIOUS FIGHTING FOR OUR
MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS. HIS PROFESSED CONCERN OVER
POSSIBILITY OF "IRRATIONAL" SPANISH MILITARY ESCALATION
WOULD SEEM TO POINT TO GOM AWARENESS THAT SITUATION IS
DELICATE AND IF NOT SKILLFULLY HANDLED BY BOTH SIDES COULD
EASILY DETERIORATE.
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